

friends gather to show their respect and gratitude to grandparents. Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring grandparents in New Mexico and throughout the United States for their contributions to our families and our country.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. DAVID  
BOLGER

**HON. MARGE ROUKEMA**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 4, 2002*

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate an outstanding leader in our community and northern New Jersey—David Bolger, who celebrated his 70th birthday on August 12, 2002. On July 31, David's many friends in the Ridgewood community held a surprise birthday party for David, honoring him for 70 years of accomplishment and contribution to our community.

I would like not only to congratulate David Bolger on the occasion of his birthday but also to applaud him for his valuable leadership in civic and philanthropic activities.

A resident of Ridgewood since 1966, David is an outstanding example of the type of person who makes Bergen County, our state and our Nation such a wonderful place. He exemplifies the American values that have made our country great. A loyal supporter of many local organizations, he has provided generous donations to Valley Hospital, West Bergen Mental Healthcare, Midland Park Ambulance Corps, and The Woman's Club of Ridgewood. David has also donated his time and expertise to community organizations, serving as a Trustee of the Henry H. Kessler Foundation, a Trustee of the West Side Presbyterian Church, a Trustee Emeritus of the Children's Aid Society of New Jersey, and an Honorary Member of the Midland Park Ambulance Corps. His community spirit is an example for us all.

David's leadership has also been acknowledged outside the Ridgewood community, as he has been recognized as a Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary International and Honorary Mayor of Fayette, Iowa, as well as Midland Park, New Jersey. Both at home and across the world, David Bolger has looked for ways to "make an impact on people's lives," creating scholarships for needy students, providing medical support for a clinic in the British West Indies, and even donating a school bus to an orphanage in Haiti.

After working his way through college in the Pittsburgh steel mills, David went on to become the founder and president of Bolger & Co., Inc., a company that has been actively involved in real estate ventures for more than 30 years. His corporate accomplishments are impressive: Director of American Progressive Life & Health Insurance Company of New York, Director of Deotexis, Inc., and Chairman and CEO of Farmers & Merchants State Bank Holding Co., Inc. Yet even with all of his other commitments, David still finds time to help those around him and remains committed to a life of philanthropy.

David's concern for his fellow man is extraordinary. It is an honor to recognize David Bolger today for his remarkable leadership and generosity. The Ridgewood community is truly fortunate that he is dedicated to the qualities that have made this nation great. I am fortunate to call David a friend.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to Join me in con-

gratulating David Bolger on his 70th birthday and commending him for his tremendous dedication to helping others.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
CONGREGATION TREE OF LIFE

**HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 4, 2002*

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in celebration of the 50th anniversary of Congregation Tree of Life, located in the 4th Congressional District of New York.

This synagogue has been a major component of the Jewish community of Valley Stream for half a century. Since first opening its doors in 1952, the congregation has grown both in number and in spirit.

Today, 120 families belong to the synagogue. They gather in large crowds to participate in a variety of weekly, monthly and yearly activities. Although the shul has a high attendance rate for regular Shabbat services, it also hosts monthly Oneg Shabbats and family dinners three times a year. A crowd also gathers Sunday mornings for Minyan, and 8 times a year, the synagogue hosts special speaker breakfasts to discuss matters of interest to the community.

Congregation Tree of Life has different holiday celebrations throughout the year. On Hanukkah, there is a candle-lighting ceremony and festive dinner complete with latkes and jelly doughnuts. A Hanukkah fair is held before the holiday starts so the congregants and other members of the community can shop for the holiday. On Purim, members gather to hear the Megillah reading.

The synagogue is dedicated to continuing education. In the Fall, adult members meet with the Rabbi to discuss different issues and how they relate to Judaism. Twice a year, bus trips are held to visit Jewish sites of interests in different cities. Past visits have included the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC and Philadelphia.

The members are committed to helping others, both in the community and abroad. Besides participating in UJA and Israel Bond appeals during the High Holidays, the synagogue has a committee that visits the sick in local hospitals.

The contribution this synagogue and their members have made to our community is obvious. I congratulate everyone at Congregation Tree of Life on the anniversary of such a wonderful gathering place for our Jewish community.

IN HONOR OF AMBROSIO SOLANO

**HON. DIANA DeGETTE**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 4, 2002*

Mrs. DeGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor one of my constituents, Ambrosio Solano, who served bravely and honorably in the U.S. Army during World War II. Mr. Solano was drafted when he was 18 years old and participated in the D-day invasion at Normandy. After suffering shrapnel wounds, Mr. Solano returned to the United States following almost 2 years of dutiful service.

Yet, Mr. Solano never received official recognition of the pain and suffering he gave for

his country. Mr. Solano never received any of the medals owed him by the federal government. Now, 56 years later, on August 28, 2002, Mr. Solano finally received his 14 medals, including two Purple Hearts, a Bronze Star, and an Oak Leaf Cluster.

I am honored to count Mr. Solano as one of my constituents and I would like to include for the record the following editorial praising Mr. Solano. It appeared in the Denver Post on August 30, 2002.

"We're gratified that Ambrosio Solano finally received the 14 medals he earned fighting for his country during World War II—although we're dismayed that the Army veteran of the Normandy invasion had to wait 56 years for recognition.

Even his family knew little about Solano's combat experiences because he seldom talked about the war with his wife or children. After keeping his own counsel for nearly half a century, Solano began to open up to his son, former U.S. Attorney Henry Solano, as they motored cross country from Boston to Denver in 1994.

Solano, 76, is a native of Chapel, N.M., who grew up in New Mexico and Colorado. He was drafted into the Army in 1943 and went ashore at Normandy on June 6, 1944, among the first waves of invading American troops who spearheaded the liberation of Europe.

Initially, Solano served in the 29th Infantry Division but later became a paratrooper and transferred to the 101st Airborne Division.

He recounted the horrors of the amphibious invasion on the Normandy beaches, recalling the clank of the landing craft's ramp as it dropped and going forward into German gunfire that awaited the invading troops. He remembered standing waist-deep in water and seeing the bodies of slain American soldiers floating by.

After he joined the paratroops, Solano jumped into the battle for St. Lo, where he suffered shrapnel wounds. Later, as American troops swept into the Rhineland, Solano was wounded in the leg.

Among Solano's belated decorations, in addition to two Purple Hearts, are the Bronze Star for combat service, Good Conduct Medal, American Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, European-African Middle-Eastern Campaign Medal, Combat Infantry badge and World War II Honorable Service button. Solano was discharged from the Army in 1946 and returned to Colorado, where he worked for Ideal Cement Co. for 36 years. Because the war kept him from going to college, Solano, who's been married 52 years, was determined that his four children would do so. Son Henry is a lawyer and another son, Ambrose, is a doctor.

About three years ago, Solano wrote to the government, hoping to finally get his medals, but to no avail. Then Representative DIANA DeGETTE, D-Denver, stepped in and made it happen.

You may not know Ambrosio Solano personally, but the mere fact that you are free to read these words means you owe him thanks for fighting to preserve your freedoms by helping defeat Nazi tyranny.

We can never adequately repay Solano and his comrades, but the medals he finally received are his country's way of thanking them,